

From: Robin Spencer [robinsqpants@hotmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, March 17, 2007 5:24 AM

To: CallHomeAct

Subject: Phone Charges

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

Dear Representative,

I am the wife of a deployed U.S. soldier, Matthew. The cost for my husband to call me or his other family is unreasonable to our standards and anybody's that we've talked to about it. Because of the separation, we were initially talking every other or every third day. But we were spending about \$50 per week on that (International minutes). It was too draining on our finances. Now we have to rely on e-mail and instant messages to communicate regularly. The wireless internet access where Matthew is at costs based on how many online hours people want to buy. We pay \$75 for 300 hrs of online time. Calling blocks come in smaller units than that too. Additionally, we chose not to go with landline connection at his base because it was \$50 per month of online access.

Please consider alternate charges for those who are deployed. We would like to hear each other's voice more often than once per month.

Thank you,

Robin Pope

Exercise your brain! Try Flexicon.

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List ABCDE

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Thank you,

Robin Pope

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From: DIANA L FAUDE [dfaude@gsi.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 17, 2007 3:04 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Cost for Phone and mailing issue for deployed spouses, family

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

07-2

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Re: Cost of calls from deployed soldiers to call home or call family and friends

I am very upset with the government for the way this operation is set up for deployed soldiers.

I would like you to hear my personal concerns and financial hardship due to husband being deployed.

First your main issue for this letter was suppose to be about costs of calling home. the soldiers have to get calling cards, which is limited to one company, that in it's self is wrong as we could get better rates with someone else, but I understand your cannot have multiple phone companies. We are stuck with AT&T. Now why should my husband have to pay to get a calling card to call home, when it is not his choice to be there. He choose to be a soldier and defend his country, but Iraq? Times are hard enough over there and at home without him.

There should be free phone service, Internet service, and mailing to and from home for these deployed soldiers and families. The government doesn't pay that well for them to be over there risking there lives and being torn away from there families. My daughter is extremely upset her daddy is over there and that is hard enough on us.

The pay is not that great to be shipped off for a year or more to protect another country. The the little extra pay and tax free break on money they do make, they have to pay for phone cards, and Internet service. So, in theory the are just taking there extra money to be there and turning around and paying to stand in line wait for a phone and pay for a phone call. There goes some of that little extra money they make, just to make calls home to children and wife's, moms and dad, that is not right.

Now I like to send things to my husband and do so very often, things the government doesn't supply and should. Look at what they are doing, why shouldn't they suffer anymore then they do. So, I try to make it better by sending him a few things each month. necessities, some sanitary wipes, kleenex, magazines, and some treats. This costs me money and takes two to three weeks before he even receives my mail. There again, money out of our pockets because the government wants our soldiers over there to protect and organize Iraq.

We only suffer more from this deployment, that my husband is gone and pray for his safety each and every day. The costs for phone calls, and afraid he will get hurt going to use the phone as he has to walk to the embassy to call me and then it costs money and re-charging a calling card. Because he is in a special unit, they don't supply the phones. And the mail costs for packages and the time it takes to get something to him. This is expensive and ridiculous.

They don't receive the items they need for there trucks and repairs, that puts them in harms way as well if they break down.

I am so upset with this entire deployment and will be taking it further, if costs are not cut out for the soldiers and that they start receiving the parts and equipment they need for there jobs and promotions that are long over due.

Please take a long look and wonder how you would feel if your husband or wife or son or daughter were over there making a couple extra dollars to be torn away from you. They have to pay for what they miss, they suffer possibilities of being attacked if there vehicles malfunction because the government is not spending the money that goes over there to the right places, the generals are making tons of money and getting there stars, sitting in nice new comfy office chairs, while our soldiers go off and deal with day to day missions with there lives at stake. How proud do you think I am about this?

Do something special for our soldiers that are deployed, something that they deserve, why should they pay for being over there, we just hope he comes home alive and in one piece. For goodness sakes, someone start making sure they get what they need. Free phone calls, and Internet, the supplies and equipment they need, and the increase in pay for being over there putting there lives on the line for Iraq.

I hope you will address these issues and forward my concern for equipment and pay onto the right places. If not I will still contact my representative about these concerns as well.

I hope you will help to enforce that this will become a policy that the soldiers do not have to pay for things such as calls home and families mailing items to them, and make it happen.

My concerns are valid and not blown out of proportion, please help these soldiers to get the things they deserve for being in a foreign country during a deployment. It is only fair that these things be done for them. I will leave it at that, as I have other concerns that will refrain from telling you about. I hope you can help to make some of these things possible mentioned above and get them set up as soon as possible.

Thank you.

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

cassie.townsend@us.army.mil
Sunday, March 18, 2007 12:32 PM
CallHomeAct
call home act

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

07-2

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Hello,

My name is Cassie Townsend. My husband is currently deployed to Iraq. On days that he calls me it makes me so happy, and nothing can go wrong. On days where he can't it seems like a cloud hangs over my head. I believe that if the phones and the amount charged were adjusted then i would be able to talk to him more. First of all there are limited phones. Therefore, my husband has to wait in line for hours. He didn't choose to go there and shouldn't have to spend so much time to make a call to his wife. Second, the price. It seems as though he will pay ten dollars for thirty minutes. He pays it because it is so important to talk to me. I can not understand how our soldiers who are making the ultimate sacrifice for our country would even be charged for something like a phone call. Regardless, that is how it is and honestly how it will probably remain. If the cost was lowered i know that would personally help us out. It would make communication a little more available. Thank you for your time, Cassie Townsend

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To:
Subject:

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CallHomeAct
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From: samantha garneau [objectivist111@yahoo.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 18, 2007 1:27 PM

To: CallHomeAct

Subject: My Deployment-related communication Input

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

07-2

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

My husband is serving in Baghdad. Communication via the internet is our chief method, through emails and Instant Messages. When the internet is down, we spend ALOT of money on phone cards. One week, it cost 350 dollars. We couldnt keep up at that rate. Currently we can't afford to talk to one another on the phone, so his mother buys us minutes every now and then. Snail mail takes to long when we have the internet. I think his internet costs 75 a month, however it is down a lot. Phone communication is best for our insanity, but we buy like 1200 minutes on the card for 100 dollars but it is really only like 200 or 300 minutes (which doesnt last long!). It would be awesome if the minutes were more afforable. I hope I gave enough information!
-Samantha Garneau

8:00? 8:25? 8:40? Find a flick in no time
with the Yahoo! Search movie showtime shortcut.

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-Samantha Garneau

8:00? 8:25? 8:40? Find a flick in no time
with the Yahoo! Search movie showtime shortcut.

From: Amy Musick [amelia_bedelia99@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2007 1:03 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: My Thoughts on Prices to Call Home

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 1 2 2007

07-2

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Amy, and my husband is currently depolyed to Iraq, and is stationed somewhere in the Baghdad area. I received this opportunity to write through my Family Readiness Group, and thought that I would share my "2 cents worth". My husband purchased a 500 Unit AT&T Rechargable calling card over there for \$40. It is supposed to be used for state-to-state calling, but it is able to be used overseas. If it is used for overseas calling, even though he's calling from an AT&T sponsored phone line through the Army using the AT&T calling card, we're lucky if we get 200 minutes out of it. My mom and I recently put \$70.00 worth of minutes on that card, and he is only able to use 350 minutes out of the almost 1000 minutes that we bought. Please explain to me why it is that AT&T doesn't have an overseas calling card where we will be able to actually use ALL of the minutes that we pay for, available to our troops over there? If they do and for some reason my husband didn't find it, please let me know where it can be purchased at and I will be glad to buy one. Because he can only use AT&T where he is stationed and they have ABSOLUTELY NONE of those cards available for purchase, and my husband and his fellow soldiers have looked and asked, yet they are always directed to purchase and use the state-to-state cards. Yeah, \$40 may not seem like a big chunk of change, but once you buy those 2-3 times a month, PLUS the amount of money that you spend to 1.) buy things that your husband needs over there to put in a care package and 2.) ship that care package over there, I personally usually end up spending close to \$400/month. I know my financial situation you could care less about, but seriously, when you have one phone company that monopolizes (as I see it) the military with phone access and phone cards, and they can't even provide you with the opportunity to buy phone cards where you get to use at least 1/2 of the minutes that you purchase, there is something wrong. Yes, we can purchase other phone companies phone cards, but then we are "charged" with minutes taken off our card, by AT&T because it is not one of their cards and we are using their phone and not the other company's. I mean come on people, everybody knows that military families aren't rolling in the big bucks here, so all we're asking for is a little break, just give us the minutes on the phone cards that our husbands/wives/son/daughters/etc., have purchased, so that we can continue to hear their voice on the other end of the line, it's all we've got sometimes for months on end. Please, help us out.

Sincerely,

Amy Satterlee
A Proud Army Wife

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Let Yahoo! FareChase search your favorite travel sites to find flight and hotel bargains.

No. of Copies rec'd 2
List ABCDE

From: Amy Musick [amelia_bedelia99@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2007 1:03 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: My Thoughts on Prices to Call Home

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

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A Proud Army Wife

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From: Nicole Eickbush [assistantnic25@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, March 19, 2007 2:45 AM

To: CallHomeAct

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JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

I think that it should be free to all deployed soldiers to call home to their loved ones. Communication is very important to the families. It is what keeps us going knowing that we are here waiting to hear from them and supporting them. It is so nice to hear that familiar voice and makes their deployment go that much better. Esp when you have kids involved to talk to their mom or dad. The excitement on my kids face to talk to their dad is priceless!!

Expecting? Get great news right away with email Auto-Check.
Try the Yahoo! Mail Beta.

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Sent: Monday, March 19, 2007 2:45 AM

To: CallHomeAct

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

09-2

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Try the Yahoo! Mail Beta.

From: Roberta Harding [hardingr1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 3:00 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Deployment-related phone charges

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

67-2

To Whom it may Concern:

When I receive calls from my deployed spouse, it is such a relief to hear his voice. We both hesitate to talk long, as the cost of calling home is so high. Families pay such a high price in so many other ways when a spouse deployed, this gesture to make calling home more affordable, would really mean a lot to many of us.

Thank you.

Roberta Watto

FCC Provides Address for Military Families to Comment on Costs of Long Distance Calls

On December 22, 2006 President George Bush signed the Call Home Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-459) into law. The legislation directs the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in coordination with the Department of Defense and the Department of State, to examine the costs of overseas calls between deployed military personnel and their families and to take action to make communication more affordable. In accordance with this act, the FCC is requesting comment from military personnel and their families about the various means they use to communicate during deployments and the costs associated with various service providers. Written comments may be submitted by e-mail to CallHomeAct@fcc.gov or mailed to FCC Pricing Policy Division, Room 5A232, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554.

We won't tell. Get more on [shows you hate to love](#)
(and love to hate): [Yahoo! TV's Guilty Pleasures list](#).

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(and love to hate): [Yahoo! TV's Guilty Pleasures list](#).

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From: Don & Allison Ellibee [ellibee@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 3:26 AM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Deployment-related phone charges

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
 Office of the Secretary

07-2

I was told that my input was needed on the ways I communicate with my husband while he is deployed in Iraq. We have 7 children and for my husband to call and talk to each of the kids weekly is a priority and needed for my children to make it through this difficult time. In fact two of my children's class mates fathers was killed last week in Iraq and if my husband did not take the time or money to call them each week and something traumatic was to happen to him while he is fighting the war I think that they would have even a hard time. We use internet daily to communicate. In order for him to have internet in his room over in Iraq we pay 70 dollars a month for it to only work about ½ the time. He gets kicked off of it quite a bit too. He is able to call us from a DSN line but because we live in Alaska and 45 minutes away from the base we are still paying money for him to talk to us because it is long distance. We spend about 150 dollars a month in calling cards for him to call home. So we use the internet and telephone to communicate. The separation pay we get is all spent on phone cards plus some out of our pockets. I also spend a small fortune on mailing packages to my husband each month. He is stationed somewhere where there is not a PX (store) So anything he needs from razor blades to toothpaste and socks... all has to be mailed to him. If there was any way that the post office could give military a cut on shipping items to deployed soldiers that would help also.

Thank you for your time in reading my comments,
 Allison Ellibee

Your input needed (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

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Tracy L. Arntson

"Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle."

Mobilization and Deployment Specialist

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 List ABCDE

Army Community Service, Bldg. 600 Room A31
Phone: (907) 384-0297
Fax: (907) 384-0282
Tracy.Arntson@richardson.army.mil

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

From: Bickley, Anna L MWR ACS Deployment Spec [anna.bickley@us.army.mil]

Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 2:12 PM

FILED/ACCEPTED

To: CallHomeAct

Cc: Bickley, Anna L MWR ACS Deployment Spec

JUN 12 2007

Subject: phone rates for Soldiers (UNCLASSIFIED) Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

Classification: **UNCLASSIFIED**

Caveats: NONE

My husband is currently deployed to Iraq. While I find the rates at his FOB in Kalsu to be reasonable (I believe it is about 4 cents a minute.), the rates in Kuwait seem exceptionally high. While he was in Kuwait, he purchased a phone card. I later added minutes to the card. It cost 24 to 26 cents a minute to call to the United States from the FOB in Kuwait. I believe it is wrong for AT&T (or any other company) to charge deployed Soldiers 26 cents a minute to talk with their families back home.

Thank you,

Anna Bickley
ACS/Mobilization & Deployment
384-0503

Classification: **UNCLASSIFIED**

Caveats: NONE

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From: Bickley, Anna L MWR ACS Deployment Spec [anna.bickley@us.army.mil]

Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 2:12 PM

To: CallHomeAct

Cc: Bickley, Anna L MWR ACS Deployment Spec

Subject: phone rates for Soldiers (UNCLASSIFIED)

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Office of the Secretary

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Anna Bickley
ACS/Mobilization & Deployment
384-0503

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

From: maureen.essi1@us.army.mil
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 2:23 PM
To: CallHomeAct; mo; me

07-2

my husband has been deployed since oct 06 and he we have talked on the phone less than ONCE every two weeks. The main reason for that is: it takes over 10 minutes for him to get through to an operator that will transfer him since we are a long distance call from any military base. The town of wasilla, ak is out of the range for fort richardson and the operators will not allow the "free morale calls" to our area which all soldiers are entitled to. this makes me very upset because we didnt want to live far away. (there was no post housing available and the city of anchorage is UNSAFE and overpriced). If anyone else experiences this issue, the simple solution would be to authorize any DSN number in the states to forward calls from iraq to the families. or more specifically in my case, authorize fort richardson to include matanuska-susitna borough into their calling range. many, many military families have moved to this outlying area of anchorage and its doesnt seem fair to have no options when it comes to receiving calls from iraq. thank you, i hope my input helps. maureen essi

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Office of the Secretary

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To: CallHomeAct; mo; me

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Office of the Secretary

01-2

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From: ctn17493@centurytel.net
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2007 8:56 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: Troops calling home

FILED/ACCEPTED

JUN 12 2007

07-2

To whom it may concern,

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

I have a son whom is stationed in Iraq. He is on dangerous missions most of the time. He calls us before he leaves for his missions and when he gets back. It is very important for us to be able to hear his voice as is for him to hear ours and to give him support. The price of the calling cards that we buy him are very expensive. They are AT&T cards for our troops to call home from Iraq. The card says 550 state to state minutes for \$27.50 + shipping, but in reality for him to call from Iraq that card has only 143 minutes. That is more than nineteen cents a minute. Is there a better deal that we can get so our soldiers can call home. Our troops and their family would appreciate any help that you can give us. Thank You, John and Ann Barnier

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From: astegall78277@aol.com

JUN 12 2007

Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2007 11:09 AM

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

To: CallHomeAct

09-2

My husband is in the U.S. Army and is stationed in Fellujah, Iraq. For awhile he was calling home collect and it was very costly. As of now we are putting minutes on his phone card and he is using it to call home.

In all honesty they shouldnt be using anything because they should all be at home with their families instead of fighting a losing battle.

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From: sara.hancock@us.army.mil
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2007 1:43 PM
To: CallHomeAct
Subject: deployment related phone calls

JUN 12 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

07-2

My husband is currently serving in Iraq and has been for the last 6 months. He works 16-18 hour days on foot patrol as an airborne infantryman. When he is done working he will call me, but the phone cafe with cheaper phone calls is a one mile walk from his barracks and so he has to pay \$.90 a minute to call me. I suppose he could walk the mile, but when you are already walking 16-18 hours a day and will have to be going back to work in 5-6 hours it seems a little much. I also think that it is ridiculous that AT&T has a monopoly on the calling cards that they are allowed to use as they are usually more expensive than other companies and depending on where you buy them there is a large surcharge for re-charging the phone calls. Also, we live in an area which is considered long distance even if he was to have use of a DSN phone, so they will only connect him through to the local base or post and then patch him through to a calling card, again, has to be AT&T. You mean to tell me that you send my husband away from his family for a year and then you can't even cover the cost of a 15 minute long distance phone call to the soldiers family. I think that is absurd, if AT&T is going to get a monopoly on the government contract for phone calls, I think that they should allow the soldiers who don't live on base to be able to call their families for free as well. Thank you for your consideration in the matter.

Sincerely,
Sara Hancock

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